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paign to secure recruits for the ministry and missionary service; (4) to lead in training people in applied Christianity through the Social Service Department; (5) to

lead by co-ordinating the above work with the religious education program of the Sunday School and Publishing Society.

CHURCH EFFICIENCY

Young People's Societies Based on Federated Sunday-School Classes

It is frequently heard said that the organized Sunday-school class seems to be making any other young people's organization superfluous. At least it is apparent that the trend in some quarters is for the work of the young people to center around the Sunday school. Organizations known as Sunday-school federations have, in some churches, taken the place of any other young people's society. The purpose of the federation is twofold: to supplement the Christian education of the Sunday school and to furnish opportunity for the expressive activities of the Christian life. The unit of membership in the federation is a Sunday-school class with its teacher, instead of an individual unit. The advantages which accrue from this federation movement are that the religious activities of the young people have a single center, namely, the Sunday school; and that the Sunday school is given a larger opportunity to carry its work through to some kind of expression.

Free Churches and Union

The meeting of the joint committee representing thirteen denominations to consider proposals for a United Free Church of England was held recently at Mansfield College, Oxford, with Rev. J. H. Shakespeare presiding. Some eighty-two members were present, and progress was made in the direction of an ultimate working program. It was felt that any federation of churches should admit communicants to communion at all free churches alike.

One of the noteworthy recommendations was that a federal council be created, "consisting of members duly appointed by the assemblies or supreme courts" of the federating churches, and that this council should have general advisory powers, together with such executive and administrative powers as the churches might give to it later. A number of special committees were appointed and a meeting will be held in the spring, when a declaratory statement of the common faith of the evangelical free churches of England will be presented.

What the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America Is Doing

Bishop Earl Cranston of Washington headed a delegation which, on January 24, called upon President Wilson and presented resolutions in support of legislation by Congress providing for the adequate protection by the national government of aliens in this country "and for the creation of a Federal Commission of not less than five members for the study of the entire problem of the relations of America with Japan and China." The resolution asking that Congress authorize the President to appoint an Oriental commission suggested that Congress invite Japan and China to appoint similar commissions and that the American commission meet with the two Asiatic commissions in their respective countries. These resolutions had been previously adopted by "A Conference on America's Oriental Problems," held in New York, September 28, 1916, and by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America at its quadrennial meeting held in St. Louis in December.

Under the joint auspices of the American Council of the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches, and the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, a conference was held in New York City, January 13, 1917, to consider how the Christian womanhood of America may make its most effective contribution to the promotion of international friendship and world-justice through organization. There were more than one hundred invited outstanding leaders present, representing twenty-one denominations. After full and spirited discussion it was unanimously voted that the best results would be secured by having women "become an integral part of the organization of the American Council" and be "represented upon the Executive Committee." A preliminary committee of nine was elected to suggest members for election to the American Council.

At the request of the Commission on Inter-Church Federations of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America Dr. George J. Fisher has made a study of Sunday-school athletics. A questionnaire addressed to 575 physical directors of Young Men's Christian Associations brought 342 replies and indicated that in 130 communities some form of inter-church activity prevailed in athletics. The most common form of organization is that in operation in Brooklyn, which is the pioneer effort. It is known as the Sunday-School Athletic League and is a permanent organization in which about 90 churches participate and which provides for promotion of a wide variety of athletic activities as well as a summer camp, first-aid work, and lectures in sex education. This investigation indicates that a large number of communities desire to promote such activities. Where this work is related to the Young Men's Christian Association, it has grown quite satisfactory and efficient—which may point to the value of having an experienced physi-

cal director to conduct such activities. The conclusion reached by the investigator is that the time has come for standardizing this work, for outlining a model type of inter-church organization of athletics which shall provide recommendation of methods for adequately relating such activities to the local churches and to other inter-church bodies in the community.

Christianizing Society

Under this caption in a recent issue the *Methodist Review* has some pertinent things to say.

We hear much insistence that the Kingdom of God is within you. This is true, but it must labor for an outward expression. Life manifests itself in growth, evolution, and expression in organization. The attainment of a world-order in harmony with the teaching of Jesus is the end toward which the Christian must hope, pray, and labor. He must be in irrepressible conflict with everything that would hinder the realization of this end. It is this ideal that animates the church today. It remembers well enough that salvation is first individual, and that a regenerated life is autonomous, and not enforced and guided from without. But it also recognizes that good environment has great value in modifying temptation and repressing vices. So there comes upon us the dawning of a social regeneration. Heretofore the work of the church has been largely curative; henceforth it is to be both curative and preventive. The work of rescue is not to be given up, nor will it be any less, but added to this will be the breaking up and the destruction of forces and conditions that make rescue necessary. This effort will ramify all phases of life, extending to all wrongs that can be righted and to all evils that can be subdued.

The humanitarian spirit which characterizes all Christendom today, and which asserts itself in the prevailing forms of social service, is due primarily to the teaching of

the church. It is the challenge of the world thrown back upon the church to establish the validity of her faith by her works. There are those who would call a halt upon this talk of social regeneration and of Christianizing society. While the tendency may have its accompanying dangers, yet the idea is just as sound as that of the regeneration and Christianization of the individual, the home, or the school. Jesus' condemnation of formal religion was uncompromising. According to his teaching, if religion is to achieve all that it should it must function to the farthest outreach of justice, truth, and mercy. Love must be the dominant principle. Guided by this the church has sought always to take her lessons and her duty from her own resources and the field which was before her. She must and will do so in our day. Yet be it understood that in this the church is not to become responsible for social and political movements, but is to inspire its own forces with the ideals and the spirit of helpful service and as far as possible pour into all channels of human interest a reforming and purifying influence. In harmony with this view is the aspiration of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. It thus states the duty of the churches: "To secure a larger combined influence of the Churches of Christ in all matters affecting the moral and social condition of the people, so as to promote the application of the law of Christ in every relation of human life."

Church Efficiency and Health

At the last session of the Southern Sociological Congress, the general secretary delivered a sort of keynote address, "A Challenge to the New Chivalry." It is published in *Forward*, the official organ. We do not now attempt a review of the address, but gather from it a few suggestive items.

The "New Chivalry" is health. The challenge is issued for a new order of sacri-

fice—a crusade against disease. Attention is called to the fact that in all ages disease has been the heaviest drag on civilization. It is the haunting threat of every human life. During the past year it is estimated that in all the world nine and a half millions of people died from preventable diseases, and in the United States six hundred and thirty thousand. In this country tuberculosis alone costs more than the entire expense of the federal government. Malaria causes more than 3,000,000 cases of sickness every year with a cost of not less than \$160,000,000. Typhoid brings annually 35,000 deaths and a financial loss of more than \$350,000,000. All these and numerous other diseases that exact their heavy toll are absolutely preventable. When we know how to prevent and to exterminate them, they pass from the class of mere diseases and become social crimes. Death from such causes is manslaughter.

Heretofore organized religion has been preaching much about health and joy beyond the grave, while human happiness and efficiency have cried out for the redemption of health this side of the grave. Now science and religion alike have made public health a moral issue and are, therefore, calling on the church as well as on all other social agencies for a crusade of health. The church is the most powerful guardian of human life and welfare. When the causes of disease were unknown, it was largely exempt from responsibility. But now, since the causes and the prevention of disease are understood, the position of the church passes from a dim and superstitious indifference to that of a commanding moral obligation. "Hereafter a searching test of church efficiency will be its ability to achieve health for the people—health, physical, mental, and moral. And every church that holds aloof from this holy interest will thereby forfeit its historic place in the reverence and the confidence of humanity." Too long we have clung to the

idea that the church must confine itself to the realm of piety and prayer. Certainly these are just as significant as ever they were. But now that the darkness is lifted and we know how to prevent disease, there is need of doing things as well as of praying about them. Some insist on caution, reminding us that the only business of the church is to save souls. We are agreed. But who is able to draw the dividing line between soul and body? Wherein are their interests separate? If one feels more satisfied when he has biblical teaching to direct him, he should be able to find all that his case requires by consulting either the Mosaic legislation or the teaching of Jesus. In both of these the conservation of health and life is a predominant characteristic. The achievement of health today will not come apart from the support of organized religion. Long has the church been the greatest of earth's altruistic agencies. There is nothing yet in view that can take its place. It will not fail now. In each of the past centuries it has had its distinguishing achievement. It will have such in this century. It will be the conservation of human life.

Looking to Unification

The Joint Commission on Unification representing the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, met in Baltimore, December 28. They had before them the report of the Joint Commission adopted at Chattanooga in 1910, the report adopted by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at Oklahoma City in 1914, and the report adopted by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Saratoga Springs in 1916. There has been much speculation as to what would be the fundamental and vital issues. They were agreed upon as

follows: (1) the General Conference and its powers; (2) the jurisdictional conferences, their number, and their powers; (3) the status of the colored membership of the Methodist Episcopal church in the reorganized church.

The spirit of the commissioners was fine. The whole atmosphere was distinctly fraternal. The fellowship was intimate and refreshing. The discussions were all in the very best of spirit, frank and brotherly. Both sides spoke their mind freely, yet there was not a bitter or distrustful word. Questions which have been generally considered to be charged with dynamite were discussed in a calm and brotherly way. All seemed willing to consider every question *aequo animo* and to let clear judgment, a fraternal heart, and a righteous conscience give the final word in each case.

It was believed that if agreement should be reached touching the three items mentioned above, with time and patience the details of a plan for the unification of Methodism could be worked out. The commissioners were in agreement concerning many of the related questions. But in view of the magnitude of the interests involved it was impossible to reach final conclusions. The significant subjects were assigned to special committees for further consideration. They are to make their report at a session of the Joint Commission to be held June 27, 1917. An editor of one of the church periodicals who is a member of the Commission said in concluding an editorial on the meeting: "God is leading us. Let us be sure that we follow him in the patience and expectation of faith and in the largest spirit of Christian fellowship." The whole membership of the churches concerned is called upon to continue instant in prayer for the guidance and blessing of God upon the work so auspiciously begun.